

DRAFT Principles for Regulation of Early Learning

Scope

Regulation should be comprehensive – covering most out-of-home care.

Regulation should promote the health, safety and early learning of children.

As the skills, knowledge and attributes of the care provider are a critical factor in the quality of care, credentialing of individuals working in early learning programs should be considered.

Philosophy

Regulation should be carried out in a respectful manner, one that promotes problem-solving and teamwork between licenser and provider in the interest of children's well-being.

Regulatory enforcement should be just and consistent, but also allow for flexible means of meeting the intent of the regulatory standard. It should make use of progressive steps to achieve compliance.

How regulatory standards are enforced, including the frequency of monitoring, should be considered as carefully as the content of the standards themselves.

Just as regulatory standards are different in the home and center environment, effective strategies for ensuring family child care providers meet regulations may be different than those for child care centers

Parent Involvement

The regulatory system should employ multiple approaches to informing parents about the role of child care licensing.

It should be easy for parents to access monitoring and complaint histories for individual child care facilities.

As part of child care facility license renewal, regulators should seek the input of parents whose children are enrolled.

Regulation should foster partnership between parents and child care providers.

Link to QRIS Regulation will play an integral role in the Quality Rating and Improvement System, and must adapt to be an effective foundation for this effort.

Use of Technology To increase effectiveness and efficiency of operations, the regulatory system should make greater use of information technology.

Tie to Research Regulations should be based on research – including both national benchmarks and standards and also systematic review of licensing data.

Notes on Principles:

- The committee acknowledges the reality that today, in the context of the current structure for financing child care services, regulation of early learning involves balancing the impact of rules on, not only the quality of child care, but also on the supply and cost of care. If licensed care costs more than they can pay, families turn to unregulated care that is lower quality, but also costs less. The committee regrets this situation, and looks to the day, with an improved structure for financing child care, that child care regulation is more completely focused on quality of care.
- Child care providers need education and support to engage and involve parents. Parents of children in child care lead busy lives, and cannot all be expected to participate in licensing reviews.